



WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. of L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
HEADQUARTERS
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GIVEN OVATION

Congressman W. B. Wilson and John Mitchell Accorded Hearty Reception by the Miners in Convention.

Indianapolis, Jan. 27.—John Mitchell and Congressman Wilson, together with the other delegates from the miners to the American Federation of Labor convention at Atlanta, who, it was claimed, did not follow out the instructions of the miners in supporting a resolution condemning the National Civic Federation, have been exonerated by the miners in convention. The report of the delegates to the Federation convention was read by Vice President Hayes and on a motion to receive and adopt the convention took favorable action. On the entrance into the hall of the delegates to the Federation, headed by John Mitchell and Congressman Wilson, a distinct ovation was given the distinguished men.

RAILROAD WRECKS

Washington, Jan. 27.—The wrecks on railroads continue unabated. A passenger train on the Queen & Crescent was wrecked at Meridian, Miss., resulting in the death and injury of a number of passengers. At Newcastle, Pa., a head-on collision by a Baltimore & Ohio passenger train ran into an open switch and killed five railroad men and fatally injuring four others, while one mail clerk and the conductor were seriously injured. Thirty-four persons were injured when a Big Four train left the track three miles from Carey, Ohio, the accident being caused by spreading rails. A Pennsylvania train at Torresdale, Pa., killed six persons by running into a wagon, the crossing, usually guarded, being unprotected. A terrible accident occurred recently at Kinmundy, Illinois, in which James T. Harahan, Sr., former President of the Illinois Central; Frank O. Melcher, Second Vice-President of the Rock Island; E. B. Pierce and Eldredge E. Wright were killed. A brakeman on the Pennsylvania Railroad in this city was run down by a freight car and his leg crushed, necessitating amputation. Five passengers on a Pennsylvania train were injured near Phillipsburg, N. J., the train being derailed.

EMPLOYEES HEARD

Washington, Jan. 27.—For the first time in many years, if it ever occurred before, employees of the postoffice department have been permitted a hearing before the house postoffice committee.

"A GREAT DISCOVERY"

Washington, Jan. 27.—One of the prominent news bureaus sent out a dispatch from St. Louis a few days ago in which it was heralded broadcast that the Department of Justice in this city had made a "discovery" with reference to the alleged dynamiting plots of the McNamara brothers. It was stated that the Department of Justice had written a letter to a hotel man in St. Louis in which it was revealed that the register of a certain hotel in that city contained the name of O. A. Tveitmoe, alleged to be in his own handwriting. It was further disclosed that Mr. Tveitmoe's name was placed upon the aforesaid register on November 27, 1910, and also that upon this same register appear the names of Samuel Gompers, F. M. Ryan, James O'Connell and F. J. McNulty. The discovery is indeed important, and hope is entertained that the Department of Justice recognizes its full significance. In November 1910 there occurred in the same city of St. Louis conventions of the Union Label Trades Department, the Metal Trades Department, Building Trades Department and the American Federation of Labor, and if the Department of Justice continues its investigation further, it will no doubt find upon the registers of the various hotels the names of a large number of men who are prominently identified as officials and active men in the trade union movement of America. This clue is worth following.

HEARINGS BEFORE LABOR COMMITTEE

Washington, Jan. 27.—Hearings have been going on before the House Labor Committee on the Taylor System and much important information has been the result. The testimony of General Crozier, Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, was important; in fact, he endorsed most emphatically the eight hour day, and in his statements in reference to the shorter work day he said that men at the present time were accomplishing as much in eight hours as they did formerly under the 9 and 10 hour day.

CONVICT LABOR IN VIRGINIA

Richmond, Va. Jan. 27.—The Governor of this State has reiterated his belief that the custom of letting State convicts out by contract should be abolished, and again suggested working convicts on state roads, in a note which he attached to one bid for convict labor, which he has transmitted to the Legislature. The Reliance Manufacturing Co., of New York and Chicago, bid for 500 convicts at 85 cents each per day and for women convicts at 40 cents per day; they to be employed in the manufacture of overalls and shirts. It is expected that the convict labor question will be considered by both Houses of the Legislature, and an effort is being put forth to abolish the system of farming out these unfortunate people.

ASK MORE PAY

Washington, Jan. 27.—It is rumored that demands for an increased wage and better working conditions will be made during the year by the Commercial Telegraphers on the Postal and Western Union Telegraph Companies. It is denied, however, that there is any anticipation on the part of the men that a general strike will ensue.

"PRINTING IN PRISON"

Washington, Jan. 27.—The San Francisco Star in a recent issue printed an excerpt from one of the State papers in which it was recounted that, since the law passed by the last session of the legislature permitting articles used by the State to be manufactured by convict labor, a printing plant had been installed at the San Quentin prison and the calendars of the Supreme Court had been printed there; stating that heretofore this work had been done at the State printing office, but that with convict labor it could be done much cheaper. The paper also expressed a fear that "all the State printing would eventually be done in the prison". Editor Barry makes the following comment, which is full of meat: "We fear none of your fears. We know printers, because we are one of them. They do the damndest foolish things betimes in the name of the Lord, but few of them ever commit a crime, and in the State prisons of California today there are only enough to 'get out' the Supreme Court calendar, which is issued two believe only once every three months, and which any 'tyro'—not necessarily a 'typo'—might be able to manage."

SMALL SUM FOR PENSIONS

Washington, Jan. 27.—It has been given out that pensions totaling \$281,457 were paid last year by the subsidiaries of the United States Steel Corporation. In view of the tremendously large capitalization of this gigantic corporation, the sum enumerated is extremely small and indicates that the company is not afflicted to any appreciable extent with generosity.

TO DISCUSS CHILD LABOR

Washington, Jan. 27.—The annual conference of the National Child Labor Committee convened at Louisville on Jan. 25. The conference discussed matters pertaining to the elementary school, street trades and the public school industrial training, vocational guidance; unreasonable industrial burdens on women and children and the effect of education; relation of rural schools to child labor reform and child labor, and compulsory education.

FOR TELEGRAPH OWNERSHIP

Washington, Jan. 27.—Congressman Cary of Wisconsin, a member of the labor group in Congress, has introduced a bill providing for government ownership of telegraph lines, the project recently urged by Postmaster General Hitchcock, and the bill has been referred to the Post Office Committee. The measure places the telegraph systems under the supervision of the Post Office Department, in charge of a commissioner of telegraphs to be appointed in the same manner as assistant postmasters general. The bill also provides that the Interstate Commerce Commission is to appraise at their bona fide market value all the telegraph properties engaged in interstate commerce, the Attorney General then to begin condemnation proceedings against the companies.

STRIKE IN BELGIUM

Brussels, Jan. 27.—A general strike of miners is threatened. Twenty-five thousand in the Borinage district are out and the movement is rapidly spreading.

"AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST"

Washington, Jan. 27.—The February issue of the American Federationist is of unusual interest to trade unionists and general readers. It contains President Gompers reply to Senator Heyburn's insinuations that he is not an American citizen. The editorials include "The Men Higher Up Outcry"; "The Asinine Canard; Gompers Desecrated the National Flag"; "Socialist Methods vs. Trade Union Methods". Vice-President Mitchell also writes on current trade union topics. The contributed articles are all live. There is also a communication from about thirty of the most prominent social workers of the country to President Taft which is printed in full. This communication has been handled by the press agencies in such a manner as to amount to its perversion or almost entire suppression in some quarters, the effect being a misinterpretation of its purpose. It is an important expression of the sentiments of people who work close to labor. This issue should be secured by every trade unionist and carefully perused by those interested in the common uplift.

NEW YORK LAUNDRY INVESTIGATION

New York, Jan. 27.—The inquiry of the State Board of Arbitration into the conditions obtaining in the steam laundries of this city is still bringing to light the long working hours, and unsanitary conditions prevailing in industry. It has been admitted that the strike among the laundry workers has had the effect of decreasing the hours of labor, although very few, if any, agreements have been reached.

CONVICT LABOR ARTICLES

Washington, Jan. 27.—Julian Leavitt is the author of a series of articles to appear, beginning with the February number in the American Magazine. The title is, "The Man in the Cage - Why He Does Not Reform", and is devoted to the contract system in vogue in a number of states where convicts are employed by private manufacturing concerns to manufacture various products. The advance sheets of the first article contain much valuable statistical and other information.

A RAISE IS RUMORED

Wilkesbarre, Pa., Jan. 27.—It is rumored in anthracite coal circles that a surprise awaits the representatives of the Miners when they go into conference with the operators in New York, Feb. 27. It is claimed that the operators have decided to offer an advance of 10% in wages, the sliding scale to remain as at present. It is also stated that the big coal companies are reticent about discussing the matter.

ASKS FOR AN INJUNCTION

Washington, Jan. 27.—The National Capitol Brewing Company of this city has petitioned the District Supreme Court to restrain the Beer Drivers and Stablemen's union, the Brewery Workers' Union, the Bottlers' union, and the members thereof, from calling a strike at the Brewery or putting its product upon the unfair list, owing to a controversy over the reinstatement of a union driver. The Court has given the unions until early in February to answer the petition.

TAFT BANGS RECALL

Washington, Jan. 27.--Within the recent past President Taft delivered an address before the Bar Association of the State of New York and denounced the principles of judicial recall. "We don't believe that all peoples are fitted for popular government," he said. "Some of us don't dare say so, but I do; and the question whether a people is fitted for popular self-government depends upon the restraint that the minority can place upon the majority to see that justice is done. The judicial recall. The words themselves are so inconsistent that I hate to utter them. You must bear in mind that this matter of judicial recall is being agitated the country over,-- that the men speaking for it are many. What I call your attention to is that it is necessary that good people like you should speak the truth that is in you in favor of courts and their independence, and the restraints of the constitution that were imposed by the wisest ancestors any people ever had."

O'CONNELL TESTIMONIAL

New York, Jan. 27.--A number of the many friends of James O'Connell vice president of the American Federation of Labor and also president of the Metal Trades Department, A. F. of L., tendered him a testimonial reception and banquet on Saturday evening, Jan. 27, at Labor Lyceum, Brooklyn, N. Y. A large number of labor men were in attendance and an enjoyable time was had. Mr. O'Connell has been identified as an official of the labor movement for many years, and many were the complimentary expressions employed by the speakers in reference to him.

IMPORTANT CONFERENCE

Washington, Jan. 27.--At the Atlanta convention of the American Federation of Labor a resolution was adopted instructing the president of the American Federation of Labor to call a meeting of the representatives of the International Union of Steam Engineers, representatives of the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovelmen and Dredgemen, and representatives of the associated union of Steam Shovelmen, for the purpose of uniting all the organized members of this craft into one organization affiliated with the International Union of Steam Engineers. Agreeable to these instructions a conference was held at the headquarters of the American Federation of Labor on Jan. 18. A general discussion took place relative to terms of amalgamation. While no definite plans were evolved, yet considerable progress was made looking toward a future amalgamation.

UTTER'S PREDICTION

Washington, Jan. 27.--"The line separating capital and labor is too closely drawn", said Congressman Utter of Rhode Island. He addressed recently a gathering of college graduates at the University Club. "It remains with the college men to see that it is loosened in the very near future if we wish to save our country from complete ruin. The government will surely fall unless some steps are taken to bring about an element of harmony between these two classes, and its ruin will fall upon the shoulders of college graduates."

Moving picture operators in Berlin, Germany, receive from \$714 to \$9.52 per week, while operators in the smaller German cities range from \$4.76 to \$7.14 per week.

NAVY YARD STRIKE OFF

Norfolk, Va., Jan. 27.—Machinists at the Norfolk Navy Yard, who have been out as a protest against the Taylor system, have returned to work. A temporary settlement satisfactory to the men involved was reached.

SMOOT BILL GOES OVER

Washington, Jan. 27.—Senator Smoot called up his printing bill in the senate the other day, but on roll call vote it was laid over. This bill is the one that provides for the substitution of the hand presses in the bureau of engraving for power presses, together with numerous other changes.

GRANITE CUTTERS WIN

Atlanta, Ga., Jan. 27.—After eight months' suspension of work on the part of the granite cutters throughout the state of Georgia for a new agreement, with an increased wage rate and several other improved conditions, they have succeeded, through a joint committee representing their Georgia branches, in effecting a settlement with a committee representing the Southern Stone Contractors' association for four years. Their contention was well managed, there has been no ill feeling and but few non-union men employed. The latter, by the terms of the agreement, are required to carry cards in the Granite Cutters' International association if they desire to follow granite cutting in Georgia.

"FORWARD MOVEMENT"

Minneapolis, Minn., Jan. 27.—The labor organizations of this city are preparing for a general campaign of organization and education, denominating it the "Forward Movement." Halls in various sections of the city have been secured and prominent trade union speakers have been engaged to deliver addresses. The movement opens on April 21, and will continue for two weeks, and then move on to St. Paul, where the campaign will also be carried on for two weeks.

EIGHT-HOUR BILL

Washington, Jan. 27.—The Hughes eight-hour bill, which unanimously passed the house recently, is now before the senate committee on Education and Labor, and hearings have been held. Saturday, Jan. 27, President Gompers appeared before the committee and advocated the early reporting of the same. It has been intimated by Senator Borah, chairman, that the hearings will be closed in the very near future and the bill reported. From present indications it will be reported to the senate favorably.

TAYLOR TO APPEAR

Washington, Jan. 27.—Mr. Taylor, from whom the "Taylor System" derives its name, is scheduled to appear before the Labor committee of the house in defense of his system in the near future.

At Norwich, Conn., the painters recently obtained an increase of \$2 per week without strike.

CONSUMERS' LEAGUE ACTIVE

Washington, Jan. 27.—Under the direction of its investigating committee the Consumers' League in this city, which has as its ultimate purpose the improvement of working conditions in the stores and factories, will wage a campaign for the passage by congress of a bill regulating the working hours and conditions of work women in the district. The league proposes to put into operation a "white list," scheduling therein the business firms and factories that humanely treat their employees.

COLD STOPS BUILDING

Washington, Jan. 27.—Reports from all over the country are to the effect that owing to the long and severe weather conditions the building industry is practically at a standstill, Chicago reporting that over 40,000 members of the building trade unions are idle. The same ratio of stoppage has apparently been maintained in all other places in the cold belt.

CONDITIONS GOOD

Washington, Jan. 27.—Organizer Phillips of Middletown, N. Y., reports conditions in that place good, with wages fair and trade good. He also says the demand for the union label is increasing.

CHEAP LABOR SCHEMES

Washington, Jan. 27.—One of the special news correspondents in this city has just sent out an item relative to the woolen mills and cheap labor. He says: In view of the strike of textile workers at Lawrence, Mass., it is interesting to know how the woolen mill owners attract cheap labor to their mills. Congressman A. P. Gardner of Massachusetts one day in the house contributed some valuable information to the subject. "For example," said Mr. Gardner, "suppose I am a Syrian conducting a Syrian boarding house in the city of Lowell, Mass. Perhaps some mill sends down to me for hands. I furnish them at a somewhat lower rate of wages than is expected by ordinary citizen help. I advance the money for Syrian emigrants to come from the old country. I tell them that if they do not pay me back the money I advanced I will have them arrested; that they must hand over the full wages that they get in the mill. They are held in terror of the police. Meanwhile I take all their wages while I feed them and keep them alive just as I would feed and keep a horse alive that I had imported for use in a livery stable."

BOOSTING FOR REFERENDUM

Waco, Texas, Jan. 27.—The secretary of the Texas State Federation of Labor, pursuant to a resolution passed at the last annual convention of that body, has issued a call inviting all friends of the people's rule, through the initiative, referendum and recall, to attend a state conference to be held in Waco Feb. 12 next, for the purpose of promoting the movement to secure the submission by the next legislature of a constitutional amendment establishing this system of government for Texas.

PENSION BILL URGENT

Washington, Jan. 27.—A number of bills have been introduced in congress providing for pensions to civil service employees. It is stated, and with truth, that there are many in the government service who are superannuated and disabled, and with a pension system adequately providing for these old employees the government would not only be doing a humanitarian act, but also give opportunity for the employment of a large number to take the places of those pensioned. It is also claimed that the adoption of a pension plan would in reality be a step toward economy. The United States Civil Service Retirement association, which was recently in session in this city, by resolution favored the Hamill (New Jersey) bill for "straight" pensions, opposing all "contributory" plans. The "straight" plan provides that the government shall furnish the pensions, without contribution on the part of the civil service employees, and this is the plan that is favored by the majority of civil service employees.

SAILORS GET INCREASE

Washington, Jan. 27.—From recent consular reports it is learned that the scale of seamen's wages in Sweden, which went into effect on Jan. 1, this year, shows a general increase of 7.50 crowns (\$2.01) per month. Of this amount 5 crowns (\$1.34) is a direct advance, and 2.50 crowns (67 cents) is a premium paid seamen shipping for a whole year with the same owners, payable at the end of the year on condition that there has been no complaint through failure to perform duties satisfactorily. Able-bodied seamen, formerly paid 55 crowns (\$14.74) per month, now receive 60 crowns (\$16.08) and in addition the premium referred to. The firemen are paid at the same rate.

COST OF LIVING IN BRITAIN

London, Jan. 27.—The Co-operative Wholesale Societies (Ltd.) have prepared a table showing the increased cost of certain articles in the United Kingdom since 1898, and the following are a few of the cost increases: Bacon and hams sold in 1898 for 9.92 cents per pound, in 1906, for 13.28 cents, and in 1910 for 16.38 cents. Butter, in 1898, sold for 22.70 cents per pound; in 1910, for 25.74. Cheese, in 1898, sold for 10.48 cents per pound; in 1910, for 13.12 cents. Lard rose from 6.48 cents per pound in 1898, to 13.66 cents in 1910. Sugar sold in 1898 for 2.98 cents per pound, and in 1910 for 4.06 cents, with the duty reduced in 1908 from \$1.01 to 44 cents. The only decrease in cost shown in the table is on flour, meal and tea, the two former articles only lower by a small fraction of a cent, while tea is less than 2 cents cheaper.

TO UPLIFT CHILD LIFE

Washington, Jan. 27.—An active campaign has been begun in this city in an effort to uplift child life. The Children's council asserts that it "hopes to help increase the number of wholesome and innocent pleasures of children and young people, for its aim is not to reform children after they go wrong, but to prevent their going wrong." It is stated that the first definite work of the organization contemplates a thorough probe of certain evil conditions alleged to exist in Washington.

LOCOMOTIVE STRIKE ENDED

Washington, Jan. 27.—Through the efforts of President James O'Connell of the Metal Trades and President Franklin of the Boiler-makers a satisfactory adjustment of the strike against the American Locomotive Company has been reached. The strike has been on since last October, and while the details of the settlement have not been given out it is understood that the terms are satisfactory to all concerned.

CONGRESSMAN TO QUIT

Washington, Jan. 27.—Information coming from an authoritative source is to the effect that Congress Mohn A. Martin of Colorado, one of the labor group in Congress, will not be a candidate to succeed himself at the next election. Mr. Martin is a man who is held in high esteem by the union men of the state where he lives, and has also been of great assistance in the furthering of labor measures in Congress.

COMMISSION TO MINE COAL

Denver, Jan. 27.—Chairman Edward Keating of the State Land Board suggested sometime ago that the State should mine and deliver coal direct to the consumer, and this suggestion was taken up by the legislative committee of the Denver Trades and Labor Assembly and endorsed. The state owns valuable coal land, most of which is leased. It is probable that an amendment to the State constitution, giving a public utilities commission the right to use the public school fund to mine and deliver coal at a price that will pay running expenses and interest on the money invested, will be submitted to the people. A committee has been formed, with Chairman Keating as one of the members, to draft this amendment. The reason underlying this movement is the fact that the coal miners in the northern Colorado lignite fields have been on strike for many months, only asking an increase of 5¢ per ton in the mining rate. Since the strike occurred coal has been advanced at the mines 50¢ per ton.

CO-OPERATIVE STORES

Madison, Wis., Jan. 27.—A prominent member of the recently created Board of Public Affairs announces that Wisconsin will attempt to solve the high cost of living problem by the establishment of cooperative stores. It is stated that arrangements are under way to follow out the plan of the Reddale pioneer stores in Great Britain.

PRINTERS GET INCREASE

Washington, Jan. 27.—It was announced at the regular monthly meeting of Columbia Typographical No. 101 that the scale of wages of book and job printers in this city has, by mutual agreement between the proprietors of the job offices and Columbia Union, been advanced to \$19.20 a week, the former scale being \$18.

ASPIRES TO BE CONGRESSMAN

Chicago, Jan. 27.—Oscar F. Nelson, president of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks, is a candidate for the nomination for Congress from the 9th congressional district. Mr. Nelson is also vice president of the Chicago Federation of Labor.

MOLDERS' STRIKE WON

Anniston, Ala., Jan. 27.--On Jan. 1 the Union Foundry Company cut the wages of its molders 10 per cent, as a result of which a majority of the men went on strike. These men were unorganized and it being the third time that their wages had been cut by the Company they realized that organization was their only salvation. Some two weeks later an organizer for the International Molders' Union reached here and the men were organized, negotiations opened with the Company, and a settlement finally reached. The settlement includes only a 5 per cent reduction, and that only to continue until March 15, when all of the men are to be restored to their former status and wages. The fact that these molders were successful in maintaining their wages through organization other sanitary molders in various parts of the South are becoming interested, and the outlook is bright for an organization of this class of mechanics in a number of towns in this State.

PIANO WORKERS WINNING

New York, Jan. 27.--A campaign is in progress in this city by the Piano, Organ and Musical Instrument Workers to unionize various department stores that employ piano workers. It is said that one of the large department stores has agreed to grant the Piano Workers a union scale of wages, and also to conduct its piano department under strict union conditions. Charles Dold, international president, states that he will continue the effort to build a strong organization in this city.

DEATHS BY VIOLENCE INCREASE

Washington, Jan. 27.--A total of 48,606 deaths from violence of all kinds exclusive of suicide occurred in the registration area covered by the Census Bureau in 1910. This does not give the number of deaths by violence in the whole United States, the area being confined to 21 of the 47 states, and to a number of the cities in the 26 states and territories which are not included in the list of registration states. These 48,606 make a death rate of 90 3-10 per 100,000 estimated population for 1910 as compared with 43,627 deaths, or a rate of 85 8-10, in 1909.

TALKING BOYCOTT

Washington, Jan. 27.--The women of Washington are ready to boycott butter and campaign in other ways against the present exorbitant prices of butter if any sort of leadership will come forth. Much talk has been indulged in by housewives of this city along this line, owing no doubt to the fact that in New York the butter boycott has assumed proportions almost equal to the meat boycott of a year and a half ago.

TO PROBE RAILROAD WRECK

Washington, Jan. 27.--A searching investigation is to be begun into the railroad wreck which occurred at Kinmundy, Ill., a few days ago. Chairman Prouty of the Interstate Commerce Commission will take charge of the investigation.

At Billings, Mont., a street railway line is being constructed on the eight-hour basis, and 25 cents per day increase has just been granted.